

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

87. (Currently amended) A method of messaging over a network between patients and healthcare providers, comprising steps of:

5 initiating a query message by a patient from a patient-operated computer using a first medical messaging wizard;

generating a problem-specific, patient-specific electronic form for said patient to complete by said first medical messaging wizard from a problem-related database and a medical profile for said patient, wherein a form completed by said patient comprises a

10 query message;

sending said query message to a workflow engine at a separate network location from said patient-operated computer;

attaching said patient's medical profile to said query message by said workflow engine;

15 routing said query message with said attached medical profile to a physician-operated computer at a network location separate from said patient-operated computer and said workflow engine;

using a second medical messaging wizard from said physician-operated computer, viewing said query message by a first physician, generating a patient response message and directing said response message to said patient by means of said workflow engine;

20 If a prescription is indicated, embedding a prescription in said response message by said physician, wherein said patient response message having said embedded prescription is sent to said patient by means of said workflow engine;

viewing said embedded prescription by said patient;

routing said embedded, viewed prescription to a pharmacy of choice by said patient by means of said workflow engine, wherein said workflow engine automatically updates said medical profile with said prescription;

5 appending a billing to said response by means of said second medical messaging wizard;

sending billing data to said workflow engine, wherein said workflow engine and directs said patient response having said appended billing to said patient;

10 routing messages among physicians and physician extenders by means of said workflow engine;

wherein said workflow engine integrates a plurality of operations as a single medical profiler process, said medical profiler process including at least updating of said medical profile, attaching said medical profile to patient queries directed to said physician-operated computer, billing operations and prescribing operations; and

15 wherein said patient-operated computer and said physician-operated computer are intermittently connected to said network, and wherein exchange of messages is asynchronous.

88. (Cancelled)

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89. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 8[7]8, further comprising steps of:
encrypting said query message at said patient-operated computer;
decrypting said encrypted query message at said workflow engine;
encrypting said decrypted query message by said workflow engine;

decrypting said query message from said workflow engine at said physician-operated computer;

encrypting said response at said physician-operated computer; and

any of the steps of:

5 decrypting said encrypted response message at said workflow engine;

and

 decrypting said encrypted response message at said patient-operated computer.

10 90. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 87, ~~further comprising steps of~~
wherein routing messages comprises:

 routing said query message with said attached medical profile to a physician extender using a separate computer at a separate network location;

 using a third medical message wizard:

15 viewing said query message by said physician extender;

 generating a proposed response message to said query message;

 attaching said proposed response message to said query message;

 routing said query message with said proposed response message to said first physician; and

20 generating said response message by said first physician using said medical message wizard based on said proposed response message.

91. (Previously added) The method of Claim 90, wherein said physician extender comprises either of an administrator and a physician assistant.

92. (Cancelled)

93. (Cancelled)

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94. (Previously added) The method of Claim 90, wherein said physician extender comprises a nurse, said step of generating a proposed response to said query comprising a step of:

embedding a proposed prescription refill in said proposed response.

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95. (Previously added) The method of Claim 94, further comprising steps of: reviewing said proposed prescription refill by said first physician; and any of the steps of:

approving said proposed prescription refill;

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revising said proposed prescription refill;

deleting said proposed prescription refill; and

embedding a second prescription.

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96. (Previously added) The method of Claim 90, wherein said third message wizard is implemented as a computer program residing in computer readable media accessible by said physician extender operating said computer.

97. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 8[8]Z, further comprising a step of generating a billing report from said medical profile of said patient:

98. (Previously added) The method of Claim 97, said network including a billing system accessing said network at a billing system address on said network, and further comprising steps of:

5 sending said billing report from said medical profile of said patient to said billing system address; and
 billing said patient from said billing report.

99. (Previously added) The method of Claim 98, wherein billing said patient
10 comprises either of:

 generating a personal bill for said patient; and
 generating at least one insurance bill for said patient to a corresponding insurance provider.

15 100. (Previously added) The method of Claim 87, wherein generating a response to said query message further comprises;

 generating a first-physician-second opinion request message;
 sending said first-physician-second opinion request message to a second physician at a corresponding second physician address;
20 viewing said second opinion request message by said second physician;
 generating a second opinion message by said second physician; and
 sending said second opinion message to said first physician.

101. (Previously added) The method of Claim 87, further comprising a step of maintaining a collection of patient response templates, wherein said first physician invokes one of said collection of templates in responding to said query message.

5 102. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 87, wherein said step of routing messages comprises:

maintaining a routing table including at least one routing directive to said first physician;

wherein sending said patient medical query message to a first physician with said
10 corresponding physician address further comprises;

examining said routing table based upon said patient medical query message to find a first of said routing directives to said first physician compatible with said patient medical query message;

finding said first routing directive to said first physician compatible with said
15 patient medical query message.

103. (Previously added) The method of Claim 87, wherein said messaging protocol supports email.

20 104. (Previously added) The method of Claim 103, wherein said messaging protocol supports TCP/IP.

105. (Previously added) The method of Claim 104, wherein said messaging protocol supports the World Wide Web.

106. (Previously added) The method of Claim 87, wherein said second message wizard is implemented as a computer program residing on a computer readable medium accessible by said physician-operated computer.

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107. (Previously added) The method of Claim 87, wherein said first message wizard is implemented as a computer program residing on a computer readable medium accessible by said patient operated computer.

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108. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 87, wherein said workflow engine resides on at least one server capable of accessing said network to receive and send messages; ~~and wherein said workflow engine is implemented as a program system wherein the various stated operations are implemented as component programs which may be concurrently operating.~~

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109. (Previously added) The method of Claim 108, wherein said workflow engine resides on exactly one server capable of accessing said network to receive and send messages.

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110 - 118. (Cancelled)